

Research on the Interactive Mechanism between Ideological and Political Education and Aesthetic Communication in Higher Vocational Colleges in the Era of Converged Media

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Abstract: *The information dissemination environment in the era of converged media has reshaped the relationship between ideological and political education and aesthetic communication in higher vocational colleges, with the two forming a close interactive linkage driven by media technologies. This study, based on an interdisciplinary perspective of pedagogy, communication studies, and aesthetics, systematically constructs and theoretically explains the interactive mechanism between the two. Starting from conceptual integration, this study reveals the aesthetic turn of ideological and political education and its media logic, defines the core elements of aesthetic communication and its educational embedding methods, and proposes the interactive mechanism as a dynamic relational system featuring bidirectional regulation and co-evolution. Furthermore, from the perspective of functional forms, this study analyzes the integration of value orientation and sensory experience, the coupling of information encoding and aesthetic decoding, and the adaptation of media ecology and cognitive habits. Finally, from the perspective of construction pathways, this study elucidates the construction of interactive relationships through emotional resonance, the interactive process of symbol sharing and meaning negotiation, and the interactive efficacy of dynamic balance and systemic self-consistency. This study argues that ideological and political education and aesthetic communication form a mutually constitutive and symbiotic relational structure in the era of converged media, with their interactive mechanism taking emotional resonance as the initiating node, symbol sharing and meaning negotiation as the core process, and dynamic balance and systemic self-consistency as the mature form, thereby exhibiting nonlinear and open operational characteristics.*

Keywords: *era of converged media; higher vocational colleges; ideological and political education; aesthetic communication; interactive mechanism*

Introduction

The arrival of the era of converged media marks a fundamental restructuring of the information dissemination environment, and the convergence of media technologies has profoundly reshaped the relational patterns within educational activities. Against this background, ideological and political education and aesthetic communication in higher vocational colleges present an increasingly close state of interweaving. Whether an inherent interactive logic exists between the two, in what form the interaction occurs, and how the interactive mechanism is constructed and operated have become theoretical issues that urgently need to be addressed. This study breaks away from the conventional thinking that treats the two as relatively independent domains and reveals, from a theoretical perspective, their intrinsic correlation and interactive generativity within the converged media environment. The necessity of this study is manifested in three aspects: converged media technologies have reshaped the cognitive habits and reception methods of learners, requiring the production of educational content to adapt accordingly; the aesthetic preferences and media usage habits of the student population in higher vocational colleges have distinctive characteristics, necessitating a more targeted analytical framework; the interactive relationship between the two has long been simplified as an instrumental "combination" or "infiltration," lacking an in-depth revelation of its internal mechanism. Based on this, this study conducts a systematic analysis from three dimensions—conceptual integration, functional forms, and construction pathways—to establish a theoretical framework for the interactive mechanism between ideological and political education and aesthetic communication in higher

vocational colleges in the era of converged media.

1. Conceptual Integration and Logical Starting Point of Ideological and Political Education and Aesthetic Communication from the Perspective of Converged Media

1.1 The Aesthetic Turn of Ideological and Political Education in Higher Vocational Colleges and Its Media Logic

The information dissemination environment in the era of converged media has profoundly reshaped the form of ideological and political education in higher vocational colleges, prompting its paradigm shift from traditional rational indoctrination to affective immersion. The internal driver of this shift lies in educators' growing attention to the emotional structure and aesthetic preferences of the educated subjects, transforming abstract value concepts into perceptible and experienceable aesthetic images, thereby achieving the educational goals on both cognitive and affective dimensions. The convergence of media technologies provides technical support for this transformation, enabling the integration of multiple semiotic systems such as images, sounds, narratives, and interactions, thus forming a multimodal and multidimensional mode of educational expression. In this process, the seriousness of ideological and political education is not diminished by its aesthetic expression; on the contrary, it gains a more penetrating delivery path through the vehicle of aesthetic forms, achieving an organic unity between educational content and receptive experience^[1].

Media logic plays a structural role in this transformation. The interactivity, immediacy, and fragmentation of converged media have changed the organization and dissemination rhythm of educational information, requiring the content production of ideological and political education to adapt to the audience's cognitive habits and attention distribution. Media is no longer merely a channel for information transmission; it deeply participates in the generation of educational meaning. When the content of ideological and political education is presented through an aestheticized media language, its communication effect no longer depends solely on the rigor of logical reasoning but rather on the accuracy of emotional arousal and the completeness of aesthetic experience, which constitutes the basic operational logic of ideological and political education in higher vocational colleges in the era of converged media.

1.2 Core Elements of Aesthetic Communication and Their Educational Embedding

As a mode of information transmission centered on sensory experience, aesthetic communication encompasses three interrelated dimensions: the selection of semiotic systems, the arrangement of narrative structures, and the creation of atmospheric and artistic conception. The dimension of semiotic systems involves the coordinated use of multimodal signs, including visual, auditory, and tactile signs, which determines the external form and perceptual quality of the communicated content. The narrative structure concerns the organization of plot, the control of rhythm, and the setting of suspense, which influences the audience's degree of immersion and depth of emotional engagement. The creation of artistic conception points to the overall atmosphere and emotional tone formed during the communication process, serving as a key condition for the generation of aesthetic experience. These three elements interweave and support one another, collectively constituting the complete mechanism of aesthetic communication, in which the absence of any single element may lead to a reduction in communication efficacy.

In the educational context of higher vocational colleges, the educational embedding of aesthetic communication manifests as its implicit carrying of value guidance functions. Aesthetic communication does not directly transmit educational content; instead, it creates psychological conditions for the audience's internal value identification by evoking their aesthetic pleasure and emotional resonance. The method of embedding is typically indirect and penetrative: educational intentions are encoded within aesthetic symbols, and the audience naturally accepts and internalizes the educational content during the process of aesthetic experience. This embedding mechanism avoids the psychological resistance that may be triggered by didactic communication, transforming the educational process into a conscious and pleasurable activity of meaning construction.

1.3 Conceptual Definition of the Interactive Mechanism and Its Mutual Constructive Logic

The interactive mechanism in this study refers to the dynamic relational system of mutual influence

and mutual construction between ideological and political education and aesthetic communication. This concept transcends the one-dimensional notion of "influence" or "combination," emphasizing the bidirectional regulation and co-evolution formed by the two in their operational process. Ideological and political education provides a referential framework of value orientation for aesthetic communication, defining the boundaries and direction of its expressed content; aesthetic communication, in turn, provides a perceptual mode of presentation for ideological and political education, expanding its pathways and depth of reaching the audience. The two shape each other through their interaction, forming a nonlinear and open relational structure^[2].

The core of the mutual constructive logic lies in acknowledging the complementarity at the functional level and the permeability at the structural level between ideological and political education and aesthetic communication. From a functional perspective, ideological and political education focuses on the clarity of value orientation, while aesthetic communication excels in the flexibility and depth of emotional influence, with the two supporting each other. From a structural perspective, the boundary between the two tends to blur in the operational environment of converged media, where educational content often appears in aesthetic forms, and aesthetic expression frequently carries educational intentions. This mutual constructive relationship endows the interactive mechanism with dynamic balance, maintaining the value stability of ideological and political education while granting sufficient expressive vitality to aesthetic communication, thus achieving an organic integration of the two functions at the systemic level.

2. Functional Forms and Structural Element Analysis of the Interactive Relationship

2.1 The Integration Form of Value Orientation and Sensory Experience

The integration of value orientation and sensory experience in the converged media environment presents a feature of debordered functional integration. Value orientation, as the core direction of educational content, relies on the psychological channel provided by sensory experience for the effectiveness of its transmission. Sensory experience, in turn, gains a thickness of meaning beyond pure aesthetic pleasure through the embedding of value orientation. Their integration is not a simple functional superposition but an organic unity formed in the communication process, in which value orientation is implicitly encoded into sensory materials, and sensory experience becomes an important medium through which value orientation reaches the inner world of the educated subjects. This integration form transforms the educational process into a compound experience possessing both cognitive depth and emotional warmth.

The realization of the integration form relies on the multimodal expressive space provided by converged media. In the traditional media environment, value orientation often resorts to rational argumentation and logical deduction, while sensory experience belongs to the independent domain of artistic expression. The technological characteristics of converged media break this binary separation, enabling sensory signs such as images, sounds, and narratives to carry value connotations, and allowing value expression to obtain richer modes of presentation through aesthetic forms. The cognitive characteristics of the student population in higher vocational colleges further reinforce the necessity of this integration, as their aesthetic preferences and media usage habits determine the primacy of sensory experience in the reception process of education. Only through the envelopment of sensory experience can value orientation achieve effective positioning and anchoring in the audience's cognitive schema^[3].

2.2 The Coupling Mechanism of Information Encoding and Aesthetic Decoding

The coupling of information encoding and aesthetic decoding constitutes the core link in the operation of the interactive mechanism. Educators, as the subjects of information encoding, transform educational content into transmissible symbolic forms, a process that involves multiple levels such as symbol selection, narrative organization, and media adaptation. The educated subjects, as the subjects of aesthetic decoding, interpret the meaning of the received information based on their own aesthetic experiences and cultural capital. The essence of the coupling mechanism lies in the degree of consistency between the meaning orientation preset by the encoding side and the meaning interpretation generated by the decoding side; the higher this consistency, the stronger the effectiveness of the interaction. The interactive characteristic of converged media provides a channel for real-time feedback for this coupling, enabling the encoder to dynamically adjust encoding strategies according to the decoding responses.

The operation of the coupling mechanism relies on the semiotic system and aesthetic conventions shared by both the encoding and decoding parties. When the aesthetic symbols used by educators align with the aesthetic expectations of the educated subjects, the decoding process exhibits fluidity and pleasure, allowing the educational content to be accepted with lower cognitive cost. Conversely, when a gap exists in the semiotic system or a mismatch occurs in aesthetic conventions, the decoding process may encounter obstacles or misinterpretations. The educated subjects in higher vocational colleges display distinct generational characteristics and subcultural tendencies in their aesthetic preferences, which imposes higher demands on the encoding ability of educators. An effective coupling mechanism requires educators to possess keen insight into the audience's aesthetic preferences, flexibly utilize symbolic resources that conform to the audience's aesthetic habits while maintaining the accuracy of value orientation, and achieve a dynamic balance between encoding intentions and decoding interpretations.

2.3 Structural Adaptation between Media Ecology and Cognitive Habits

The structural characteristics of the media ecology and the cognitive habits of the educated subjects in higher vocational colleges have a deep adaptive relationship, and this adaptation constitutes the ecological environment foundation for the operation of the interactive mechanism. Information dissemination in the era of converged media presents characteristics of fragmentation, multitasking, and contextualization, with information distributed in short and concise forms across multiple media platforms, and users often processing multiple information sources simultaneously within the same time period. This media ecology is highly compatible with the cognitive habits formed by the higher vocational student population, who are accustomed to jump reading, visual understanding, and emotional judgment, and have limited patience for linear logic and long-form discourse. The existence of this adaptive relationship grants aesthetic communication a natural communication advantage in the converged media environment, while ideological and political education in its traditional form faces reception obstacles^[4].

Structural adaptation is not only reflected in the matching between media forms and cognitive habits but also, more deeply, in the alignment of meaning construction methods. The converged media ecology encourages users to participate in the co-construction of meaning, where information is no longer a finished product transmitted in one direction but a semi-finished product available for users to re-create and re-interpret. This method of meaning construction is highly consistent with the internal logic of aesthetic communication, where aesthetic meaning itself is accomplished through the participation of the receiver. The cognitive habits of the educated subjects in higher vocational colleges also exhibit similar constructivist characteristics, tending to understand information through interaction and form judgments through participation. Therefore, the effective operation of the interactive mechanism requires educators to fully respect and conform to this structural adaptation, placing the design and dissemination of educational content within the overall framework of the converged media ecology, and achieving educational goals in a manner that aligns with the audience's cognitive habits.

3. Construction Pathways and Operational Characteristics of the Interactive Mechanism

3.1 The Construction of Interactive Relationships Based on Emotional Resonance

Emotional resonance serves as the initial node for activating the interactive mechanism, and its essence lies in the formation of an affective synchronization between educators and the educated subjects. In the converged media environment, the occurrence of emotional resonance relies on the affective field created by aesthetic communication, where symbolized emotional expressions trigger the emotional memories and emotional experiences of the educated subjects, enabling them to unconsciously accept and internalize the emotional states transmitted by educators. This resonance differs from rational identification, as it possesses a stronger physicality and immediacy, capable of narrowing the psychological distance between the interacting parties in a short time and laying an emotional foundation for subsequent meaning exchange. The formation of emotional resonance marks the transformation of the interactive relationship from one-way information transmission to a two-way emotional circulation^[5].

The construction process of the interactive relationship reflects the hierarchical progression of emotional resonance. Surface-level resonance occurs at the intuitive level of aesthetic symbols, where the educated subjects experience instantaneous emotional fluctuations due to formal elements such as

images, sounds, and narratives. Deep-level resonance touches the value beliefs and self-identity of the educated subjects, enabling them to form more stable attitudinal tendencies on the basis of emotional involvement. The technological characteristics of converged media support this hierarchical progression, as interactive functions allow emotional expressions to receive immediate feedback, thereby strengthening the intensity and sustainability of resonance. In the educational context of higher vocational colleges, the construction of emotional resonance requires full consideration of the emotional structure and aesthetic preferences of the educated subjects, selecting symbolic resources that are relevant to their emotional experiences, so that the occurrence of resonance has a genuine psychological foundation rather than being artificially contrived.

3.2 The Interactive Process of Symbol Sharing and Meaning Negotiation

Symbol sharing serves as the fundamental condition for the unfolding of the interactive process, referring to the common understanding and consistent expectations formed between educators and the educated subjects regarding the use of symbols. In the converged media environment, the semiotic system is no longer unilaterally prescribed by educators but is gradually generated and adjusted through the interaction between the two parties. Aesthetic symbols, due to their openness and polysemy, provide ample space for symbol sharing, allowing the educated subjects to assign personalized meanings to symbols based on their own cultural backgrounds and aesthetic experiences; these meanings are continuously revised and approximated through collision with the educators' intentions. The process of symbol sharing itself is the process of deepening the interaction: the broader the scope and the deeper the degree of sharing, the stronger the effectiveness of the interaction.

Meaning negotiation constitutes the core link of the interactive process, and its essence lies in the dynamic balance achieved between the educators' intentions and the educated subjects' interpretations. Meaning does not pre-exist within the communicated content; rather, it is generated through the interaction between encoding and decoding, and this generative process has a distinct characteristic of negotiation. The educated subjects do not passively accept preset meanings; instead, they interpret the received information based on their own cognitive schemas and value orientations. When a deviation occurs between the interpretation results and the educators' intentions, the interactive process enters the stage of meaning negotiation. The methods of negotiation include dialogue, questioning, interpretation, and reinterpretation, and the interactivity of converged media provides technical support for these negotiation methods. The outcome of meaning negotiation is not a simple triumph of the educators' intentions but a consensual understanding formed through continuous interaction between the two parties, an understanding that both contains the core direction of the educational content and accommodates the individual differences and creative interpretations of the educated subjects.

3.3 Interactive Efficacy of Dynamic Balance and Systemic Self-Consistency

The interactive mechanism presents a characteristic of dynamic balance during its operation, reflected in the coordination and unity between the stability of value orientation and the diversity of aesthetic expression. Value orientation requires educational content to maintain a relatively constant core direction, ensuring that the directionality of the interaction does not deviate from the educational goals. Aesthetic expression pursues diversification of forms and styles to adapt to the different aesthetic preferences and media usage habits of the audience. An inherent tension exists between the two: excessive emphasis on stability may lead to rigidity in expression, weakening the appeal of aesthetic communication; excessive pursuit of diversity may cause ambiguity in the core direction, affecting the achievement of educational goals. The realization of dynamic balance requires the interactive mechanism to possess the capacity for self-regulation, enabling it to flexibly adjust the ratio between stability and diversity in specific contexts^[6].

Systemic self-consistency is the concentrated manifestation of the interactive mechanism's operational efficacy, referring to the coherent and mutually supportive holistic state formed among the various elements of the interaction. When the interactive mechanism achieves systemic self-consistency, the educators' encoding strategies match the decoding habits of the educated subjects, value orientation integrates with sensory experience, and media forms adapt to cognitive habits, with no significant contradictions or conflicts remaining among the elements. Systemic self-consistency is not a static equilibrium state but an organic unity continuously maintained through dynamic operation. The environmental characteristics of converged media require systemic self-consistency to possess

openness and adaptability, capable of absorbing changes in the external environment and transforming them into regulatory signals within the system. The degree of systemic self-consistency of the interactive mechanism in higher vocational colleges directly determines the collaborative efficiency and overall effect of ideological and political education and aesthetic communication in their specific operation, serving as an important indicator for measuring the maturity of the interactive mechanism.

Conclusion

This study systematically constructs, from a theoretical perspective, the interactive mechanism between ideological and political education and aesthetic communication in higher vocational colleges in the era of converged media. The essence of the interactive mechanism lies in the mutual constructive relationship formed by the complementarity at the functional level and the permeability at the structural level between the two, presenting a debordered integration feature in the converged media environment. Ideological and political education provides a referential framework of value orientation for aesthetic communication, while aesthetic communication provides a perceptual mode of presentation for ideological and political education. The operation of the interactive mechanism takes emotional resonance as its initiating node, lays the interactive foundation through symbol sharing, and runs through the entire process with meaning negotiation, with the three forming a progressive and linked operational logic. The mature form of the interactive mechanism is embodied in dynamic balance and systemic self-consistency, that is, maintaining coordination and unity between the stability of value orientation and the diversity of aesthetic expression, and forming a mutually supportive holistic state among elements such as encoding strategies, decoding habits, media forms, and cognitive methods. Future research can be further deepened and expanded from the perspectives of the correlation between platform characteristics and interactive forms, the targeting of audience differences and interactive models, the diachronic nature of media iteration and mechanism evolution, and the cultural context of aesthetic change and value construction.

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